Dear Dave, 4/10/92

With a few minutes before going out for the papers, the day having begun at 11:20 p.m., a few words I've not used to my sisters apropos of the kind of medical care I get locally also relevant to what I told you for your doctors-to-be.

You may remember that right after the January EKG at Johns Hopkins, a non-invasive test, when the electronic probes touched my right shin I soon broke out with red pimples that were soon weeping. The family doctor told me it was an infection, prescribed an antibiotic and told me to apply the salve, neosporin, and to keep it covered with a non-stock pad. It required a 3x4 one very soon and after initially healing soon spread and got worse. He then renewed the prescription for the antibiotic and then his associate prescribed a different one, saying that one was not working. And it continued to get worse. So I phoned his office to see if I should come in or if he'd make a referral. He sent me word that it was from the "old" circulatory problems, to see a cardiovascular surgeon he should have remembered I have reasons not to want to see, several involving him. His secretary, knowing this, remembered a surgeon who had done very well with one of her boys when she had to take him to the emergency room, so I got to see him, two weeks ago.

First he told me that it was not an infection but a masceration.

Then he told me tnat I should put nothing on it so it can get air and to expose it to the air whenever possible, keeping it covered with a gauze, not a nonstick pad. He said it would heel itself without medication and to return in two weeks, which was yesterday.

There was a loose scab about 3x4 inches, he flaked a little that was about to peel off and told me to let the rest remove itself, for me not to remove it. Discontinue pad, too.

Then I had my regular appointment wih my podiatrist, who has become a friend. I prepared for him and then decided to give the thing some air so I rolled the TED down and my pantleg up. He got interested in it, asked me about it and said he'd speed the healing by taking off what was not still sticking. That he said would help the new skin grow and assure that any weeping, of which there was none, would dry out faster. And almost all of it peeled off easily, not sticking.

This it to say that I've had about three months of unnecessary time-consuming trouble and expense if not also some risk that was unnecessary, that if there had not been the initial incorrect diagnosis of what should have been obvious it would have amounted to nothing in very little time.

The antibiotic salve prevented air access and kept the wetness that should bave dried out from doing so, this also spreading the area. And there is always the problem of taking several months of unnecessary antibiotics.

Best,

Harold